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AUTHOR Patterson, Tom W.; And Others
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ABSTRACT

Holland postulates six personality types, to which he relates vocational choice as the expression of one's needs and personality. This study was designed to validate one of these types, which he designated as Social. One hundred and nine occupational therapy students were administered six tests which measured needs, personality factors, self concept, anxiety levels and interpersonal behaviors. The general findings indicated that occupational therapists corresponded to the social personality type description given by Holland. Comparisons with other social type groups give some, though equivocal, support to the concept of social type as well as pointing out the need for further validation of each personality type and each occupation included in the typology. (Author/TL)

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A Partial Validation of Holland's Theory of Vocational Choice

Tom W. Patterson, John P. Marron, and Naomi B. Patterson

Colorado State University

Holland (1966) has developed a pragmatic, predictive theory in which personality types are related to occupational choices. He postulates six basic personality types (Realistic, Intellectual, Social, Conventional, Enterprising, and Artistic). Presumably there is a commonality of needs and interests within each type. These needs and interests lead a given individual to seek out corresponding vocational environments that will permit expression and fulfillment of these needs and interests. Thus Social types would be expected to seek out Social types of environments in such areas as education, health, and other helping occupations. Research has shown that personality types, occupational choice, and self-perceptions are related (Folsom, 1969; Wall, Osipow, & Ashby, 1967).

The intent of the current study was threefold: (1) First, to ascertain the validity of Holland's description of the Social type by looking at the personality variables of a social type group, occupational therapists, and comparing the group with the description provided by the type to which it belongs, (2) Secondly, to assess the internal consistency of the theory by comparing the personality descriptions of several groups falling within the Social type; and (3) thirdly, to investigate the discriminating power of the theory by comparing a social type group against groups not similarly classified.

Procedure

Measures of needs, personality factors, self-concept, anxiety levels, and interpersonal behaviors were obtained from 109 female, occupational therapy students at Colorado State University who completed the Edwards' Personal Preference Schedule (Edwards, 1954), the Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire, Form C (Cattell, 1962), the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (Hathaway & McKinley, 1951), the Tennessee Self Concept Scale (Fitts, 1965), the IPAT Anxiety

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Scale Questionnaire (Cattell & Scheier, 1963), and the FIRO-B (Schutz, 1967). Comparable measures were obtained for contrasting groups from norms provided by the various test authors.

Results

Tables 1-8 provide the statistical results of the study. A negative t-value indicates that the OT students scored lower than the comparison group. The results will be discussed in three parts.

The first part deals with the comparative personality description of the occupational group with its typology. The Social type has been described as: "sociable, responsible, feminine....needs attention....avoids intellectual problem solving.....orally dependent"(Holland & Nichols, 1964, p. 236) and as "accepting of others, broad interests, capable, content, easygoing, extroverted, friendly, generous, good leader, gullible, helpful, informal, insecure, liberal, talkative, persuasive, poised, popular, receptive, satisfied, socialble, sweet, understanding, unoriginal" (Holland, 1963, p. 18-19). In general, the results of the personality measures reflect a high correspondence with the typology description. OT students are seen as being socially oriented, group joiners, responsible, shy and feminine in their interests, work, and hobbies, behaviors designed to include themselves in the affairs of others on a close intimate basis, not overly-achievement oriented, accepting of others, having a variety of interests and desirous of change and new stimulation, capable of organizing their work and lives, relaxed, nonanxious, interested in understanding and helping others, liberal, popular, and leaders via cooperative efforts rather than through directiveness. The results support Holland's description of the Social type.

The second question dealt with the internal consistency of the theory. For this portion, the OT group was compared with psychology majors and elementary teachers (see tables 7 and 8). In terms of expressed and wanted interpersonal behaviors on the dimensions of inclusion, control, and affection on the FIRO-B, the OT group strongly resembled psychology majors but differed significantly on

all six measures from elementary teachers. These results cast doubt on the theoretical assumption that Social type groups share mutual behaviors and needs.

The third issue is whether a Social type group can be reliably discriminated from other groups. Tables 1-6 present the analyses relevant to this question. Tables 1, 3, and 5 indicate that OT students are reliably different from non-college women on a multitude of personality variables. Table 2 and Table 8 indicate that the number of significant differences drop markedly when they are compared with college females in general although the number of differences still exceed those expected by chance alone. Table 4 results reflect excellent discrimination between OT students and a combined group of college males and females. Table 6 reflects a higher self-concept for OT students than for the general population.

Summary and Discussion

The results of this study indicate support for Holland's theory of vocational choice in terms of supporting the personality description attributed to the Social type, at least for OT students, and verifying its discrimination value in distinguishing among groups. The equivocal results found in describing several groups within his Social type points out the need for refining descriptions within a given type to assure that the groups are homogeneous in terms of their needs and interest patterns. Further refinement would enhance the possibility of obtaining "pure" types from which more accurate predictions could be made either from his personality type to vocational choice or from one's vocational choice to predicting personal attributes of the individual.

Table 1

OT Students Compared with Noncollege Women[a] on the Edward's Personal Preference Schedule

Needs	Noncollege Women		OT Students		t	p
	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	$\bar{x}$	S.D.		
Achievement	13.58	3.95	12.77	3.66	-2.01	<.05
Deference	14.72	3.84	12.89	3.29	-4.96	<.001
Order	15.59	4.57	9.51	3.94	-13.76	<.001
Exhibition	11.48	3.88	13.99	3.48	6.49	<.001
Autonomy	12.10	4.11	12.29	4.07	.43	
Affiliation	17.76	4.15	18.18	3.91	.98	
Intraception	15.28	4.13	17.81	4.86	4.95	<.001
Succorrance	12.86	4.55	12.93	4.41	-.15	
Dominance	10.24	4.73	12.14	4.68	3.74	<.001
Abasement	16.89	4.88	16.01	4.75	-1.70	
Nurturance	18.48	4.43	18.97	4.75	.96	
Change	15.99	4.73	19.50	4.60	6.99	<.001
Endurance	16.50	4.66	12.01	4.30	-9.47	<.001
Heterosexuality	8.12	6.59	13.34	5.58	8.30	<.001
Aggression	10.16	4.37	7.40	4.15	-6.07	<.001
Consistency	11.59	1.83	11.46	1.85	-.65	

[a]From Edwards, A. L. Edward's Personal Preference Schedule, Revised Manual 1959. New York: The Psychological Corporation, 1959, p. 10.

Table 2

OT Students Compared to College Women[a] on the Edward's Personal Preference Schedule

EPPS Scale	College Women		OT Students		t	p
	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	$\bar{x}$	S.D.		
Ach	13.08	4.19	12.77	3.67	-.68	
Def	12.40	3.72	12.89	3.29	1.20	
Ord	10.24	4.32	9.51	3.94	-1.51	
Exh	14.28	3.65	13.99	3.48	-.69	
Aut	12.29	4.34	12.29	4.07	0	
Aff	17.40	4.07	18.18	3.90	1.66	
Int	17.32	4.70	17.81	4.86	.86	
Suc	12.53	4.42	12.93	4.41	.76	
Dom	14.18	4.60	12.14	4.68	-3.69	<.001
Aba	15.11	4.94	16.01	4.75	1.57	
Nur	16.42	4.41	18.97	4.75	4.63	<.001
Chg	17.20	4.87	19.50	4.60	4.12	<.001
End	12.63	5.19	12.01	4.30	-1.13	
Het	14.34	5.39	13.34	5.58	-1.52	
Agg	10.59	4.61	7.40	4.15	-6.22	<.001
Con	11.74	1.79	11.46	1.85	-1.29	

[a]From Edwards, A. L. Edward's Personal Preference Schedule, Revised Manual, 1959. New York: The Psychological Corporation, 1959, p. 10.

Table 3

Occupational Therapy Students Compared to Noncollege Women on the 16 PF Test (Form C)[a]

	Noncollege Women		OT Students			
Factors	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	t	p
A	7.40	2.3	7.73	2.1	1.62	
B	3.60	1.6	4.92	1.2	11.36	< .001
C	6.90	2.3	7.32	2.0	2.18	< .05
E	3.60	2.1	3.95	2.4	1.48	
F	6.60	2.5	7.04	2.3	1.92	
G	7.60	2.2	6.04	2.4	-6.66	< .001
H	6.60	2.3	6.13	2.4	-2.03	< .05
I	7.50	2.0	7.62	1.0	1.20	
L	4.90	2.0	4.94	2.0	.20	
M	5.30	1.9	6.10	1.9	4.33	< .001
N	4.50	1.9	4.60	1.9	.55	
O	5.40	2.1	4.33	1.7	-6.51	< .001
Q_1	4.80	2.2	5.58	2.1	3.80	< .001
Q_2	7.80	1.8	7.11	1.5	-4.77	< .001
Q_3	7.30	2.4	6.93	2.3	-1.63	
Q_4	5.80	2.3	5.32	2.3	-2.16	< .05

[a]From Cattell, R. B. Handbook Supplement for Form C of the Sixteen Personality Factor Test. Champaign, Illinois: Institute for Personality and Ability Testing, 1962, p. 12.

Table 4

Occupational Therapy Students Compared to a Combined Group of College Males and Females on the 16 PF Test (Form C)[a]

	College Group		OT Students			
16 PF Factors	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	t	p
A	7.4	2.1	7.73	2.1	1.53	
B	4.6	1.4	4.92	1.2	2.56	<.02
C	7.1	2.1	7.32	2.0	1.07	
E	4.0	2.0	3.95	2.4	-.20	
F	7.6	2.1	7.04	2.3	-2.35	<.05
G	7.0	2.0	6.04	2.4	-3.94	<.001
H	6.5	2.2	6.13	2.4	-1.52	
I	5.3	2.8	7.62	2.2	9.71	<.001
L	5.6	2.1	4.94	2.0	-3.13	<.01
M	5.5	1.9	6.10	1.9	3.07	<.01
N	5.1	2.1	4.60	1.9	-2.55	<.02
O	5.0	2.0	4.33	1.7	-3.78	<.001
Q_1	5.1	2.0	5.58	2.1	2.23	<.05
Q_2	6.8	1.9	7.11	1.5	1.96	
Q_3	6.9	2.3	6.93	2.3	.13	
Q_4	5.4	2.3	5.32	2.3	-.34	

[a]From Cattell, R. B. Handbook Supplement for Form C of the Sixteen Personality Factor Test. Champaign, Illinois: Institute for Personality and Ability Testing, 1962, p. 13.

Table 5

OT Students Compared with Normal

Minnesota Females on MMPI Scales[a]

	Normal Females			OT Students			
Scale	N	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	t	p
L	397	4.27	2.63	3.83	2.28	-1.71	
F	118	3.13	3.49	3.53	2.46	1.00	
K	373	12.08	5.07	17.35	3.82	11.62	<.001
1-Hs	373	13.14	4.88	13.42	3.09	.72	
2-D	396	19.26	5.18	19.06	3.99	-.43	
3-Hy	475	18.80	5.66	21.44	3.70	5.97	<.001
4-Pd	373	18.41	4.40	20.85	2.63	7.15	<.001
5-Mf	108	36.51	4.83	37.74	4.23	1.99	<.05
6-Pa	397	7.98	3.32	9.60	2.38	5.69	<.001
7-Pt	373	25.21	6.06	28.28	3.72	6.42	<.001
8-Sc	373	22.65	6.50	26.29	4.45	6.67	<.001
9-Ma	373	16.12	4.11	19.82	4.44	7.72	<.001
0-Si	350	25.00	9.58	25.09	8.89	.27	

[a]From Dahlstrom, W. G. and Welsh, G. S. An MMPI Handbook. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1960, p. 48.

Table 6

OT Students Compared with General Population

Norms on the Tennessee Self-Concept Scales[a]

Scales	Population		OT Students		t	p
	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	$\bar{x}$	S.D.		
A-Physical	71.78	7.67	71.71	6.00	-.11	
B-Moral-Ethical	70.33	8.70	70.33	7.23	0	
C-Personal	64.55	7.41	67.48	6.84	4.04	<.001
D-Family	70.83	8.43	71.98	8.07	1.35	
E-Social	68.14	7.86	68.72	6.44	.83	
Self Criticism	35.54	6.70	34.05	5.28	-2.58	<.02
1-Identity	127.10	9.96	127.06	11.21	-.35	
2-Acceptance	103.67	13.79	108.17	11.94	3.52	<.001
3-Behavior	115.01	11.22	115.46	9.31	.45	
Total	345.57	30.70	350.70	24.60	1.92	

[a]From Fitts, W. H. Tennessee Self-Concept Scale (Manual). Nashville, Tennessee: Counselor Recordings and Tests, 1965, p. 19.

Table 7

Means and Standard Deviations of

Groups on the FIRO-B

	Means				Standard Deviations			
Scale	A	B[a]	C[a]	D[a]	A	B	C	D
e^I	5.86	4.6	5.4	5.2	1.85	2.82	2.23	1.96
w^I	5.31	5.4	4.0	3.4	3.28	3.16	3.49	3.42
e^C	2.04	2.9	3.4	3.1	1.77	2.47	2.03	2.38
w^C	4.63	4.7	5.0	5.1	1.99	1.97	1.66	1.93
e^A	4.21	3.7	3.6	3.7	2.30	2.20	2.10	2.07
w^A	5.03	5.0	4.9	4.3	2.38	2.15	2.20	2.35

[a]From Schutz, W. C. The FIRO Scales Manual. Palo Alto, California: Consulting Psychologists Press, Inc., 1967, p. 7.

Table 8

Comparison of Occupational Therapy Students

with Other Groups on the FIRO-B[a]

Scale	t Tests		
	A vs. B (df = 340)	A vs. C (df = 147)	A vs. D (df = 789)
e^I	4.87***	1.10	3.40**
w^I	-.24	1.96	5.56***
e^C	-3.63***	-3.55***	-5.46***
w^C	-.30	-1.09	-2.28*
e^A	1.92	1.46	2.16*
w^A	.11	.30	2.95**

[a]A = OT students; B = Radcliffe freshmen women; C = Psychology majors; D = teachers.

*p <.05

**p <.01

***p <.001

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